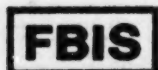


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Latin America Report

No. 2405



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20 November 1981

LATIN AMERICA REPORT

No. 2405

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INCOHERENT FOREIGN POLICY FAULTED FOR NATION'S DISCREDIT

Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 26 Oct 81 Sec 2 p 1

[Text] The so often discussed issue of our prestige abroad has assumed timeliness again on the occasion of the convening in Madrid of a meeting organized by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, at which the topic of human rights in Latin American was debated. Our country was, once again, placed on the international pillory when, among the conclusions reached, there was approval for the submission of the "Plaza de Mayo Mothers" as candidates for next year's Nobel Peace Prize. It was also pilloried, although in a somewhat more indirect manner, when the European authorities were urged to stop all financial and military aid to the repressive regimes in this part of the continent, as well as to establish a "special visa" for their officials, and to back the South American associations that are acting on behalf of respect for human rights. Finally, and this affects us directly, it is proposed "to intervene with the Argentine Government to have it report officially on the thousands of missing persons."

Even if we overlook the propaganda purposes which often inspire this type of statement in certain instances, there is no doubt that, in the one of concern to us, the charge assumes greater significance and seriousness, because it appears to be backed by a European government organ. This accusation, which compounds other previous charges persistently disseminated by the world press, seriously damages our prestige as a civilized nation in the context of the international community. In view of this regrettable situation, perhaps the time has come to inquire whether, as the government's rhetoric has repeatedly and monotonously proclaimed, it is due solely to an orchestrated campaign of discreditation handled from abroad; or rather, to what extent it is due to poor management or erroneous direction of our foreign relations, or to procedures and attitudes repudiated by international public opinion.

Without precluding the former entirely, because there is clear evidence that the aforementioned self-interested campaign exists, we think that much of the heretofore unfortunately appreciable results accrued by it to our detriment may be a result of the latter. In fact, there are many deviations, corrections and anomalies which the present government administration has incurred, as a negative contribution to the aspect of our image in the international realm.

The problem of the missing persons during the battle against subversion, to take the issue which has prompted this comment, has not been explained with sufficient clarity, and we have even gone so far as to officially assume contradictory positions in dealing with it. For example, whereas, until some time ago it was categorically stated that no investigation would be allowed which might involve those who had been potential agents of repression, the exact opposite was claimed later. Similarly, our

declining prestige abroad has not been helped by the prolonged maintenance of the state of siege either, with the aftermath of individuals held without judicial process at the mere whim of the executive branch, when the authorities have emphatically declared the definitive elimination of subversion and terrorism.

Nor should we have accepted, at the time, the activity of an investigating committee from the OAS, whose presence in our country represented a manifest renunciation of our sovereign rights on behalf of an international agency. But, when its entry had been permitted and a report which was not exactly flattering to us had been prepared, it was absolutely bewildering when the government described the stormy debate evoked by its discussion within the inter-American organization, and the conclusions arrived at by the latter, as a success for our diplomacy.

That same sign of weakness seems inherent in our relations with the United States, the improvement in which after a harsh period of controversy is being celebrated as a resounding victory, without noting that the desirable rapprochement is surrounded by conditions and explanations regarding the same issue of human rights, which our authorities have found it necessary to accept and to make to officials and legislators of that foreign country. Such attitudes entail an incomprehensible disregard for the features of our national self-respect and, of course, they are not the best course of action for restoring the damaged reputation that we have abroad.

The weakness that we cite has been confirmed again with the undecided, vacillating position that the government is displaying in the matter relating to the sending of troops to the Sinai, wherein, after many months, it has not decided either to accept or reject the proposal. We do not know the reason behind this reluctance, whether it is fear of antagonizing the aggressive Arab nations opposed to peace in the Middle East, including the terrorist Palestine Liberation Organization, in the event that it accepted this, or that of damaging the incipient, contingent rapprochement with the United States, if it should not. Such a position, regardless of whether it may have been caused by an erroneously conceived political calculation, only serves to highlight an obvious inefficiency and incompetence.

Our relations with the Soviet Union provide another telling example of the lack of consistency in the foreign policy implemented by this government. While the increase in our exports to that country may be acceptable in view of the current circumstances in international trade, because they do not exceed the merely mercantile realm, what is not readily explainable is that military missions are officially invited, and their members decorated; because this involves to some extent the assumption of a political-type position toward a nation whose regime is the antithesis of ours.

The squandering of money spent on sending constant missions abroad, genuine expeditions of officials with an excessive number of members, combined with expensive openings of government bank branches abroad, contrasts not only with the fundamental austerity that should prevail in the entire republic, but also with the grievous economic situation that the country is experiencing. The largest delegation to attend the last meeting of the International Monetary Fund was precisely the Argentine representative group, and the absurdity that it reflected is not lessened by the fact that not all its members were public officials or representatives of state banks and enterprises. The others realize all that has been stated, because it is no secret to anyone. And therein lie the causes of our loss of prestige which it is being futilely attempted to blame on a deliberate campaign. The latter unquestionably exists, but its successes are the work of our government.

2909

CSO: 3010/223

DAILY SEEKS CLARIFICATION OF OFFICIAL POLICY

Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 21 Oct 81 Sec 1 p 2

[Text] Five and a half years have now elapsed since the Armed Forces assumed the nation's political power, for the stated purpose of restoring its violated republican institutions and rehabilitating the wrecked state of law to which the unfortunate disinterment of a demagogic, corrupt, totalitarian regime had led. We use the term "disinterment" deliberately, because it summarizes the notion of what we are asserting. One disinters only what is dead, and the sad memory of our decadence in both the national and international realm, to which we had been brought by the first Peronist decade, was dead in the consciousness of sound Argentines.

We had to undergo a new experience, of the same type or nature as the previous one, in order to realize, at the end of 3 long years, that we had been returning to the past. There was nothing, absolutely nothing left for us to learn. We had to become accustomed to the vicissitudes of personal insecurity, fostered from abroad by the regime which came to power and, once there, proved incapable of eliminating them, thereby proving its incompetence for controlling public order, a basic element in any government.

We had to put up with the arrogance of the trade unions, regimented in the service of the government and not, as would have been fitting, that of the legitimate interests of their members. We had to withstand the impositions of certain business corporations, which reneged on their goals for the sake of a degrading submission to the totalitarian economic structures advocated by the deposed regime.

The annoying privileges for certain sectors, the financial gains for others and the deals, difficult to prove on the judicial level, in which the leaders of the system engaged, constituted the currency of that disgraceful system. As a telling example of the public moral crisis to which we had stooped at the time, it would suffice to cite the criminal proceedings to which the former president and third wife of the one who was described on this very page as the "one mainly responsible" is still liable.

We have deliberately dwelt on the recollection of this ominous but recent past, in order to devise some concept of the government's indecision that is being noted to an increasingly marked extent with regard to projection or initiative in the political realm.

This gives the impression, first of all, that the government of the Armed Forces which has ruled us for nearly 6 years wanted to place a veil of silence over these

scars which have infected the Argentine social entity to the point of threatening its very survival. It entails a temporizing that is irreconcilable with the goals cited in the military coup of 24 March 1976, which consisted precisely of the elimination thereof. But what is even more serious is the fact that, in addition to that silence, described by those who are suspicious as concealed complacency, the administrative management of the high-ranking military has been causing unfortunately assertive events which are fostering an unquestionable maintenance of the inherited totalitarian structures.

A political system cannot perpetuate itself indefinitely with the mere reminder of the eradication of subversion and the restoration of order. Since this is fundamental, it is only a starting point. If the purpose were that exclusively, all the confused dialectics with which we are being inundated daily by the government's propaganda concerning the nation's future would be superfluous. The government has in view something more than that basic, initial goal; because, otherwise, its further stay in power would not be justified.

The criticism that we are making does not mitigate the fact that there has been a sanctioning of some legal regulations, such as the decontrol of urban leasing contracts or the repeal of the law on supply, which are associated with a genuine liberal ideology. But both the one and the other have a merely irrelevant quality when confronted with the texts of a definitely totalitarian type. At most, they show a sign of indecision and uncertainty regarding the true purposes of the "process."

However, time does not pass in vain, and as it elapses, it affords a calibration of intentions and, unfortunately, in this instance, a thwarting of legitimate expectations. The sensation caused by this proven totalitarian survival, tinged with a slight liberal concession, is only that of a vacillating lack of resolution within the government, and that of another disappointment for the citizenry's hopes and illusions.

The government's incomprehensible position can lead only to this. On the one hand, it announces the existence of a political plan which, except for the very general and ambiguous "introductory" documents of the "process", continues to be a mystery to the entire citizenry that does not appear to count for anything, either in the prior consultation or in the subsequent preparation. On the other, the one presumed responsible for that plan, namely, the minister of interior, has secretly undertaken to explain it to various audiences which are always restricted. Some time ago, those receiving such confidences were the members of the Supreme Court of Justice; and now they have been the bishops. One cannot clearly understand what intervention in this regard is incumbent on a jurisdictional authority, by definition apolitical, and on a Church sector whose specific mission is completely dissociated from the implementation thereof. Nevertheless, they have been appealed to, as have prominent individuals noted for their disagreement with the administration that has been carried out, who have been given an opportunity to devise alternative programs.

All of this has caused a sense of insecurity, vacillation and consequently, inaction, which is not in keeping with the mission of a government that came to restore the institutions which had been violated. Furthermore, one has the conviction that, with the pretext of "moderation", what is being sought is to stifle the critical voices which are becoming increasingly loud, in an attempt to content them through the handy expedient of postponing any important decision and leaving everything for later on.

There are informal talks with political personages, at sporadic intervals there are sounds of a future plan for the country in restricted meetings, and work is being done on it with concealed advice from palace consultants. But what is not being done, as would be fitting, is to promote the great national debate of ideas, from which what should or should not be accomplished to rehabilitate a nation in crisis would result, even though possibly in a controversial manner.

Viewed from a distance of nearly 6 years, the path that has been traversed is not the proper one. So there is a pressing need for the beneficial correction that the country is awaiting from those who are, for the present, its rulers.

2909

CSO: 3010/223

ACCORD WITH THAILAND TERMED POSITIVE STEP

Buenos Aires LA NACION in Spanish 27 Oct 81 p 8

[Text] Thailand, whose foreign affairs minister has made a brief visit to our country, is a Southeast Asian nation which, despite the geographical distance, has a place in the context of world politics which coincides with that of Argentina in many respects.

The shortness of his stay did not deter the prominent visitor from attesting to his gratification over the increasing friendship between the two nations, and the good prospects for increasing the bonds of a promising trade. He also underscored the views with which both countries observe the solution to the troubled situations in that part of the world, as in the case of Kampuchea.

In a harmonious act, five nations (Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand) joined together by the so-called ASEAN agreement, set forth the reasons for a joint action in Southeast Asia, in the political and economic areas, transcending the natural, understandable differences based on national individuality. It is a part of the globe capable of offering our country opportunities for growth advantageous for all parties. If one examines the world situation, one notes that those developing countries are not so seriously affected by the recession as others, including the industrialized nations themselves. The idea of creating an economic community in the Eastern Pacific Basin is progressing and, according to the comments made here by the Thai foreign minister, it is being planned, and its concrete results would be advantageous. On other occasions, we have cited in these columns the potential advantages for Argentina.

Obviously, for the countries of Southeast Asia, the so-called Kampuchea question must be resolved urgently and as a priority, because it is a potential risk to peace, not only in the area, but also likely to spread to other areas, and even become universal.

We agree with Thailand on the formation of a commission within the scope of the United Nations, which has been proposed and is already fully under way, to obtain a means for resolving the problem.

The invasion of Kampuchean territory by forces from Vietnam and, as a corollary, the imposition of a government that caters to the aggressor's interests (and also to those of the Soviet Union, in opposition to those of the People's Republic of China) has created the issue. The deposed government had undoubtedly earned the general criticism and its repudiation because of the abuses committed against large masses

of its population, but it is certainly not tolerable to allow its overthrow by another foreign government. It is the people of Kampuchea (formerly called Cambodia), a thousand-year old nation, themselves who should decide on their destiny in free elections which are guaranteed and backed so that no one will have a right to propose and put up objections to the desires expressed in those elections, with justification. Therefore, the opposition should unify its action. It will be the only means of insuring stability and legitimacy for the authority that results. This is the view shared by Argentina and Thailand. The analysis of the situation was unquestionably one of the essential topics of conversation between the two foreign ministers.

The agreement between Argentina and Thailand has been expressed in the joint press communique following the meetings, during which an examination was made of the situations relating to the Asian area, the problems of the North-South dialog and the political confrontations in Latin America. The specific issue of Kampuchea prompted an expression of appreciation by the visiting foreign minister for Argentina's action within the commission established by the United Nations. At the same time, San Martin Palace made note of the government's gratification at Thailand's sustained backing in the Malvinas matter.

The signing of an agreement between the two countries for scientific and technical cooperation, calling for the establishment of a joint committee to foster the intensification of the mutual ties, is proof of the useful steps that were taken.

2909

CSO: 3010/223

NEWSPAPER PRAISES IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIVATIZATION POLICY

PY102147 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 6 Nov 81 p 1

[Editorial: "Cycle of Privatization"]

[Excerpts] The sale of the Companhia Americana Fabril to the Companhia Força e Luz Cataguases-Leopoldina marks the effective beginning of the state's withdrawal from the Brazilian economy which, if carried out with unswerving spirit and purpose, will over the medium term correct one of the sources of distortion of our capitalist model.

The Figueiredo government has the merit of moving this project from the phase of rhetoric to the phase of execution. The state-owned enterprises that can be transferred to the private sector have been carefully listed, the process of their transfer to the private sector has been set in motion, and now the first operation has been transacted in strict accordance with the requirements which have been established to protect all the social and economic interests involved. The purchasing company won the bidding because it offered the best terms, and it has committed itself to invest 200 million cruzeiros immediately in equipment for the factory, maintain a minimum of 750 employees for 7 years, ensure national control and administration for 20 years, etc.

This first important transfer shows that the private sector is capable of absorbing viable enterprises operated by the government. The government operates these enterprises either because it took that option or because it took them over as a last resort to ward off bankruptcy and to avoid the negative social consequences of bankruptcy. The recession the national economy is experiencing did not discourage many private enterprises from bidding for the Companhia Americana Fabril. Thus the process of privatization made possible a significant act of confidence in the economic health of the country.

CSO: 3001/25

BRIEFS

ANTARCTIC DISCUSSED--Sao Paulo, 10 Nov (AFP)--Brazilian Foreign Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro left for Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, today where he will attend the 12th meeting of foreign ministers of the River Plate Basin countries scheduled to start tomorrow. At this meeting the Argentine, Bolivian, Brazilian and Paraguayan foreign ministers will discuss items related to the physical integration of the region. Brazilian press sources have reported that the Brazilian presence in the Antarctic will be analyzed by Saraiva Guerreiro and by Argentine Foreign Minister Oscar Camilion. The influential Rio de Janeiro's newspaper O GLOBO has reported that since Argentina has definite interest in the region, Brazil does not want its presence to raise misunderstandings with its neighboring country. Navy Minister Adm Maximiano Fonseca has confirmed that Brazil will buy a ship for transporting the members of the first Brazilian expedition to the Antarctic. Admiral Fonseca said that negotiations with Great Britain for the purchase of a polar ship have already started. The ship is to be used by the above-mentioned expedition. [Text] [PY102016 Paris AFP in Spanish 1539 GMT 10 Nov 81]

POLICE FUNCTIONS ALTERED--The federal police will no longer deal with matters related to censorship, foreigners and passports. This comes about as a result of studies carried out by Justice Minister Ibrahim Abi-Ackel and in agreement with Col Moacir Coelho, head of the Federal Police Department [DPF]. Thus, the public entertainment censorship service will operate jointly with the national censorship council, making up a new department directly subordinate to the minister's office. Likewise, the divisions of passports and the sections that used to be in charge of the entry and the duration of stay of foreigners, subordinate up to now to the departments of maritime, air and border ports, will come under the Justice Ministry general department. Although the minister feels that these changes are "a simple reshuffle of government organizations," they will involve the withdrawal of police oversight on issues of censorship and foreigners. With this, the DPF will become restricted to its constitutional function. [Text] [PY071220 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 31 Oct 81 p 1]

NEW AMBASSADOR TO SYRIA--The Government of Syria has accepted the appointment of Antonio Amaral de Sampaio as Brazilian ambassador to that country. For the last year Brazil only had a charge d'affaires in Damascus. [PY110148 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 10 Nov 81 p 6]

DETAINEE TORTURED--In a report submitted to the CNBB [National Conference of Brazilian Bishops] Acre-Uru Prelacy, Bishop Moacir Grechi has criticized the detention of the community leader (Joao Martins de Menezes). The bishop reported that (Menezes) was arrested on Friday by three federal agents, who handcuffed him behind his back and submitted him to physical and psychological tortures, threatening to kill him if he reported anything to the newspapers. According to Bishop Moacir Grechi the action undertaken by the federal agents is the type of thing outlaws do. Instead of guaranteeing security this poses a threat to the community. [Text] [PY091438 Sao Paulo Radio Bandeirantes in Portuguese 100 [as printed] GMT 9 Nov 81]

CSO: 3001/25

BARCO WITHDRAWS FROM PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish 25 Sep 81 pp 1, 13

[Text] Yesterday, Dr Virgilio Barco Vargas withdrew his name as a presidential candidate of the Liberal Party, and announced that he had no intention whatsoever of promoting a movement for internal strife within his party, "so as thereby to save himself from the liability assumed by those who demanded all the control levers for themselves and obtained them at the Medellin Convention, without any reservations."

However, in a statement released last night, Dr Barco, after announcing his withdrawal, remarked that he would continue to uphold the same ideas that he has been preaching in his campaign, and that he would lend his support to the leaders who had accompanied him, who will surely strive, in the March elections, to have a representation of that kind in the next congress, acting and thinking in accordance with the future Liberal policy.

In the first part of his statement, the former precandidate strongly attacked the Medellin Convention, concerning which he commented: "All the positions for controlling and directing the 1982 campaigns were left in the hands of a few, and in those of a political group specifically designated by former President Lopez Michelsen as one of the factions of a Liberal division which he tried to foster overtly and to which he was inviting and is continuing to invite, under the terms stipulated by him, but reserving for himself therein the personal right not to participate."

Dr Barco claims that the "Lopists are unequivocally seeking to have him serve as a preeminent leader, so as to transfer to the latter the responsibility for what might happen during this critical period for the party that is starting under precarious conditions, a responsibility which he obviously cannot and does not wish to assume."

Dr Barco, moreover, reiterated the criticism that has been made by what Dr Lopez terms the "great press" to the effect that the Medellin Convention responded totally to the prior plans devised for it, geared to them in such a way that it did not give the party or the country any surprise, and that, as a spectacle, it was not at all encouraging to the Liberal sectors and groups which were absent from it, and not even to those attending it.

2909

CSO: 3010/149

BUSH, TURBAY ESCAPE ATTACK AT AIRPORT

Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 18 Oct 81 Sec A pp 1, 14

[Text] The abortive attempt at an explosion discovered last Friday at the Eldorado International Airport, for which the guerrilla group known as "Workers' Self-Defense" (ADO) took credit, might have cost the life of not only the vice president of the United States, George Bush, and his entourage, but also President Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala, two of his ministers, the mayor of Bogota and other high-ranking government officials.

Seven powerful dynamite charges, each weighing 10 kilograms, were buried at a depth of 25 centimeters only 3 meters away from the main runway, in the northern section thereof, opposite the terminal's radar, at the Engativa side.

The dynamite could have been activated by remote control, or through a battery, something which was relatively easy for the rebels, according to the investigators.

The fact that the device was not activated is considered odd and an enigma among the authorities. Those queried said that, if the explosion had occurred, many persons would have been killed, not only employees and travelers at the airport, but also passersby and residents of areas adjoining the terminal, especially in Engativa.

Although ADO explained in a communique that it had stopped the attempt because the plane carrying Bush did not use the main runway at Eldorado, but rather the Catam runway, Civil Aeronautics officials rejected that hypothesis.

They explained that planes do not land at the Catam military base, and that the aircraft arrive only along a so-called taxiing runway, but after having used the main one at Eldorado.

In other words, they claimed, any airplane weighing over 5,000 kilograms must land on the main runway, where the guerrillas had placed the explosive device.

The airplanes that carried both the American vice president and the Colombian chief executive and their parties weighed over 5,000 kilograms.

A Gardener

The guerrillas had succeeded in removing six of the seven dynamite charges when a gardener who was cutting the grass discovered a cable very close to the runway and,

upon attempting to remove it, found that it was very long, and began to be suspicious. The employee reported the situation to the firemen, and they subsequently informed the Tourist Police, who discovered the dynamite at a distance of 300 meters from the site where the cable ended.

The police F-2 anti-explosives group deactivated the device which, in addition to the dynamite, consisted of nuts, iron parts, screws and electric exploders.

The experts said that the deactivated bomb is a thousand times more powerful than a grenade when it explodes.

Its power was such that it could reach airplanes with its fragments while they were taking off, and could even more easily reach others parked on the boarding platform.

5 Days

The F-2 explosives experts established the fact that the bomb had been set between Sunday and last Monday, and although they confirmed that the attack had been aimed against the American vice president, they also stated that the Colombian chief executive could have been a victim, along with his entourage, on his trip to Pereira on Friday.

Turbay Ayala, two of his ministers, the mayor of Bogota and other high-ranking officials took off at 1000 hours in the morning for Pereira, and subsequently for Cartago, to open a food plant as part of the "March of Bread" program. In other words, they were traveling an hour after the device was deactivated.

Accompanying Turbay, among others, were the minister of communications, Antonio Abello Roca; the minister of agriculture, Luis Fernando Londono Capurro; the mayor of Bogota, Hernando Duran Dussan; the head of the Family Welfare Institute, Juan Jacobo Munoz; the head of the Culture and Tourism Institute, Maria Paulina Espinosa de Lopez; the president of TELECOM [National Telecommunications Enterprise], Guillermo Sagra Serrano; and their relatives.

President Turbay was recently the target of an attack when the M-19 guerrillas assaulted the Narino Palace with mortar grenades.

The devices exploded a few meters from the bedroom occupied by the head of state and his family, and two persons were injured, including an Army petty officer.

Investigation

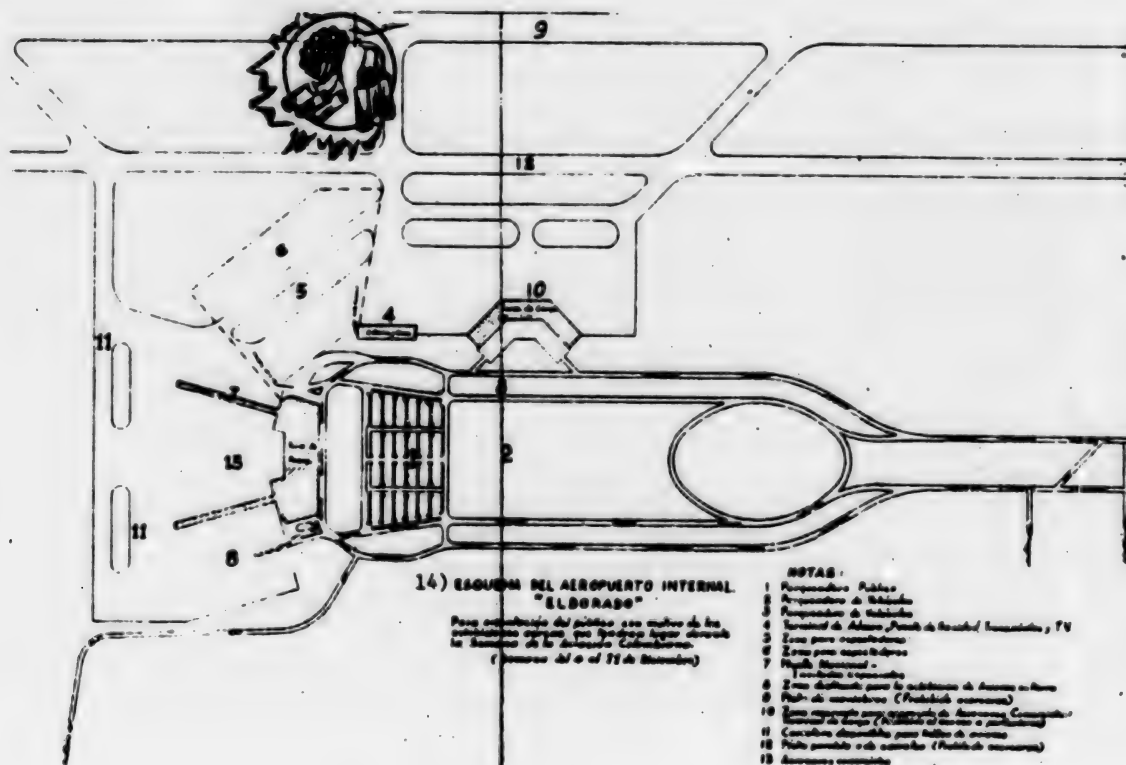
The Army and the police, as well as DAS [Administrative Department of Security], began to investigate the abortive attack, and redoubled the military surveillance at the Eldorado Airport, to prevent incidents such as the one which occurred.

They stated that this surveillance would apply to all the air terminals in the country.

A military spokesman remarked: "We are investigating the employees of the Civil Aeronautics entity and the airport who were on duty on the days when the ADO rebels managed to bring in the bomb easily." Although no one has yet been arrested as being responsible, the authorities stated that the complicity of at least one employee of the capital terminal has not been precluded.



Over 200 meters of cable, 10 kilograms of dynamite and electric exploders were about to cause the greatest tragedy in Colombia. The attack was aimed against the vice president of the United States, George Bush, and might also have reached the presidential party which traveled to Pereira last Friday.



The circle shows the site where the dynamite was found, at the head of the taxiway.

Key:

1. Public parking lot
- 2.3. Vehicle parking
4. Administration terminal, health station, baggage conveyor, TV
- 5.6. Spectator area
7. National platform, special guests
8. Exhibition area for aircraft on the ground
9. Taxiway (access banned)
10. Area reserved for commercial plane arrival. Freight terminal (access banned to private persons)
11. Taxiways available for air traffic
12. Parallel or taxiing runway
13. Commercial aircraft
14. Plan of the Eldorado International Airport. For guidance to the public on the occasion of aircraft exhibitions to take place during Colombian Aviation Week (week of 4-11 December)

2909

CSO: 3010/149

LLERAS CHALLENGES LOPEZ CANDIDACY

Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish 27 Sep 81 p 3

[Text] Former President Carlos Lleras Restrepo described the victory won at the Liberal Convention by Dr Alfonso Lopez Michelsen as "pyrrhic" and declared that the latter has neither moral nor political authority to call for a blind discipline and compliance with the decision made precipitously by his friends at Medellin, nor to order the "truce" which we shall not observe.

Dr Lleras gave notice that, "Not many of us shall attend the elections under the command of the two debate leaders, the Messrs Espinosa and Santofimio. We shall not help to bring about the distribution of the gains accrued from the deal made at Sincelejo...."

After stating that there is a necessity to elect a congressional majority that will eradicate the evils of the chambers, he claims that the huge mass of those abstaining need to be reincorporated into the electorate. He added that Dr Barco has a chance of prompting a movement of that kind.

The latter was considered a tacit invitation to engineer Virgilio Barco Vargas to reconsider his position.

Following is the text of the political analysis made by former President Lleras Restrepo, which will appear tomorrow in the magazine NUEVA FRONTERA:

Last week, before the Liberal Convention was held at Medellin, I stated candidly what I thought about a possible candidacy of Mr Lopez Michelsen. I recalled my statement, made on a fitting occasion to a group of so-called "neutrals" to the effect that I could not go along with that candidacy if it were proclaimed by that body. Today, with the process which gained strength from the Sincelejo "deal" already consummated, I confirm my line of conduct: I am only one unit in the party, but I demand my right to judge freely what its leadership bodies do and, exercising that right, I repeat that I shall not go along with the Lopez candidacy, and that if the latter goes to the elections I shall not vote for it. This is the same decision that I hear expressed by a great many fellow party members. Mr Lopez may order a truce in the discussions on the party's future, after having spoken to the point of satiety in the insolent tone that is typical of him. The rest of us have no reason to heed such an overbearing order. On the contrary, we must submit for an examination by all Colombians the proposal (because the introduction of a candidacy is nothing more than that) which the Lopist group has submitted to public opinion. And we can and

should express a view concerning it. The attempt to declare the debate closed is both irritating and unacceptable.

Mr Lopez has neither moral nor political authority to call for discipline, simply because he has never subjected himself to it, and has even gone so far as to propose that the Liberal Party break solemn commitments made to consolidate public peace. After his long vacation in Mexico, he came to found a dissident movement, the "Liberal Revolution", the only revolutionary feature of which was the name, but which upset the country's political and administrative life considerably. It was easy to appeal to sectarianism when the wounds that we Liberals had suffered during a long battle wherein his only activity was to silently make a demand and then leave the national territory were still fresh. Those of us who thought that the party had an obligation to keep its commitments and, furthermore, that it was fitting for it to keep them in order to be able to keep relations with the Conservatives civilized in the difficult task of consolidating peace and reestablishing the democratic institutions had to counter a perfidious campaign. How easy it was then to encourage the outcry "Spaniard no"! These are things that I recall now and that I recalled a great deal when Lopez Michelsen mounted his "pincers". But it was the faithful, loyal fulfillment of the principles of the National Front which reestablished the Liberal Party in power, without further trauma to public peace. Those of us who, in 1961 and 1962, assumed responsibility for keeping our pledged word knew that, by so doing, we would preserve a moral base for our party and that, founded upon it, the latter could win the elections peacefully at the end of the period wherein, through an express ruling from the plebiscite, the power must be exercised in the name of the two traditional groups.

Despite the fact that a National Convention proclaimed my candidacy for the 1966-70 term, Mr Lopez Michelsen did not go along with me. Until the last minute, he attempted to contrive an odd coalition, in talks with ANAPO [National Popular Alliance] and the Laureanist wing of the Conservative Party. The plot failed, but I am certain that Mr Lopez did not vote for me. He was entitled, and I do not blame him for his abstention. Great efforts were made later to unite the party, as I had been demanding. And, despite Lopez Michelsen's very erroneous conduct during the first year of my government, I called him to the Cesar governorship and later to the Ministry of Relations. The MRL [Liberal Reintegration Movement] dissolved, but the unity on which we others were bent and which we eventually achieved benefited Lopez primarily. Now then, how did he manage to win a majority at the 1973 Convention? It is worthwhile examining the situation, to obtain a better understanding of the personage.

During the negotiation of the constitutional reform of 1968, I had striven to eliminate the absurd ruling from the plebiscite which made it compulsory, on an indefinite basis, for the president of the republic to set up his cabinet with a strict representation of all the political sectors which had congressional seats. The implementation of this rule would have led to a collective government, it would have left in the hands of any group even the opportunity to prevent the formation of the government. At a particular juncture I thought that the battle had been won and that, when the National Front's period had ended, we would return to the presidential system without trimming, with a government party and an opposition party, based on the honest implementation of the administrative profession and the opportunity for members of parties different from that of the president to cooperate in the government from a merely personal standpoint, as had been proposed by Alfonso Lopez Pumarejo in 1934. But suddenly, the Conservative group which had backed the government, the Ospinist group,

because the Laureanist or Alvarist group had always remained with the opposition, refused to vote for what my government had proposed. After an internal crisis with very serious features, the formula now so strongly criticized, of "adequate, equitable representation", was reached. It was not the best, but it was the only one found to prevent a tragic break. In any event, that represented a fundamental improvement over what had been established in the plebiscite, and it would be easy to prove this. I shall not dwell on it because what is of concern for the present is examining the line of conduct pursued by Mr Lopez Michelsen.

I interpreted, and I continue to interpret the constitutional text as stating that what is essential is that the party which follows that of the president in votes is to reach agreement with the latter on the government program that is going to be carried out. If that agreement is not reached, it is obvious that the minority should not enter the government as such a party. However, the possibility will remain of the president's appointing members of it to lend their personal cooperation, allowing their party to play the role of an opposition, as an alternative for national public opinion. This manner of conceiving the situation was what prompted me to write what has been called the "Brussels Letter". And what was said in it seems to me to be greatly preferable to the interpretation of a bureaucratic distribution chosen by Mr Lopez Michelsen, which has been implemented. But the "Brussels Letter" gave Lopez Michelsen an excuse to invoke sectarianism again. It was said that I was trying to extend the National Front, which was not true; and, with that argument, I was asked to convoke the National Convention. In fact, the letter in which this was demanded of me was signed by some of the type of ambiguous political friends whose mentality and conduct have not failed to shock me, although after all the experiences that I have had I should not be shocked by anything.

The sectarian appeal brought results, because while Mr Lopez resorted to it in order to have the Liberals defeat me, on the other hand, he made concrete bureaucratic offers to the Conservative Party. He unhesitatingly offered the latter the Ministry of Government, the Attorney General's Office and the General Auditor's Office. And, obviously, he created the pincers. Mr Lopez, who is so spiteful and aggressive with what he terms the "great liberal press", easily joins with the individuals whom he considers to blame not only for having caused the country great harm, but also for having brought unquestionable grief to his family.

If what was accepted to prevent a major political crisis and was conceived as an opportunity for agreements on programs has become a division of positions and benefits in a shared patronage system which actually eliminates the possibility of control over and criticism of the executive branch, it is Mr Lopez Michelsen who is more to blame than anyone else. We would do well to remember this now, when he is proposing a new constitutional reform that he never mentioned during his administration.

I stated previously that Mr Lopez Michelsen has no moral or political authority to call for a blind discipline and compliance with the decision made precipitously by his friends at Medellin, preceded by the "truce" which he has had the kindness to order for us, and which we do not intend to observe. Apart from the precedents that he set as head of the MRL, it should not be forgotten that, when I was out of the country, he refused to abide by the authority of a national convention; that he urged me to form a movement against what at the time was the official stance of the

party, the movement that was called "Liberal Progressivism" from which he reaped such good political dividends. He and his friends, aware that his candidacy for the presidency would divide the party irrevocably, have imposed it. They know quite well now that, when we warned that this would happen, we were right. One goes out on the street and talks with people from the most variegated social circles, from all parts of the country, and one finds the same stubborn resistance to Lopez' reelection. He and his friends, who have not succeeded in making the proposed solution evoke enthusiasm among our fellow party members, and who are not going to succeed in so doing, know that they are walking on shifting sands, and that their only hope is to arouse in our ranks a fear of the Conservatives. It is a weapon which, as we observed, has been used several times already by Mr Lopez Michelsen: to give life to the MRL, and to attack the "Brussels Letter"; not precluding the fact that he has sought alliances to oppose the majority of the party, or to form the pincers from the government. All of this has been very clever, too clever for my taste and that of many fellow party members who view the future of the nation's destiny and the role of the Liberal Party with a different criterion.

Not many of us shall attend the elections under the command of the two debate leaders, the Messrs Espinosa and Santofimio. We shall not help to bring about the distribution of the gains accrued from the deal made at Sincelejo. The vast Liberal public which does not accept that deal must be offered opportunities to go to the polls with prospects other than those of reproducing a past which left unpleasant memories among so many sectors. One proposal would be national renewal, backed by forces not necessarily linked from now on to names of potential presidential candidates. We need to elect a congressional majority that will eradicate the evils which have been painfully making the position of the chambers decline in the eyes of the public. We need to reincorporate the huge mass of those abstaining into the electorate. Dr Virgilio Barco has a chance of prompting a movement of that kind. So do other movements with similar aspirations, which are paving the way because they embody something far different from the political decadence of the party symbolized by the reelection. Everyone can work with a magnanimous spirit, realizing that they cannot make the party anarchic, but must attempt to unite it, giving satisfaction to the public's sentiments which were overtly contradicted at the Medellin Convention, converted into a mere appendage of the meeting at Sincelejo; and deliberately contradicted, because it is already clear that many of those who voted for Lopez at Medellin are wondering what they are going to do with that pyrrhic victory.

2909

CSO: 3010/149

GUERRILLA TRAINING SCHOOL DISCOVERED

Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 8 Oct 81 Sec A p 12

[Text] Pereira, 7 October--Gen Hernando Diaz Sanmiguel disclosed that the Eighth Brigade, with headquarters in Armenia, dismantled in this area a school for subversion with which students who are minors and instructors the majority of which are being held by the Army were associated.

Diaz Sanmiguel said: "In the custody of the Eighth Brigade, with a warrant for his arrest, is the instructor German Toro, who was arrested last week when he was leaving the Atanasio Girardot School, because he is implicated in subversive activities."

He added: "We are conducting investigations and operations for the purpose of detecting these subversive groups. Several youths, between 15 and 16 years old, who were taken from their homes by this very organization to be sent to form guerrilla groups in Cordoba and Antioquia, are being held by the Army and are at the disposal of the Military Penal Court."

The high-ranking Army officer declared that this situation coincides with the claims made by Gen Bernardo Lema Henao, to the effect that one of the greatest threats to Colombia, and "the most serious dangers to the country's democratic institutions is the infiltration into education by subversive elements who are disturbing the minds of all Colombian youth."

He maintained that the most serious aspect of all is that "these people" (the subversives) are paid as teachers for the state, because the legal provisions preclude taking any direct action against them.

2909

CSO: 3010/149

BAUXITE FIND IN CAUCA AREAS ANNOUNCED

Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 26 Sep 81 Sec A p 7

[Text] Cali--The Colombian Mining Enterprise (ECOMINAS) disclosed that vast reserves of bauxite clay have been discovered in the southern part of Valle del Cauca and in northern Cauca, and are being studied in laboratories.

According to the preliminary analyses, probable reserves of 90 million tons have been found in the form of dry base, which will afford the Cales del Valle enterprise a production of 240,000 tons of metallic aluminum per year.

The manager of the Colombian Mining Enterprise (ECOMINAS), Pedro Pablo Morcillo, said that, on the basis of the studies made, it has been noted that the proportion of aluminum oxide found in the bauxite clay will probably make it possible to progress to industrial development involving the reduction of aluminum oxide to aluminum.

Contribution in Kilowatts

Morcillo said that this project may be worth about \$600 million, "but it will demand (and this is a challenge that I want to mention) the construction of the hydroelectric powerplant on the San Juan River, which is required as an essential supplement to this aluminum project."

He explained that there is an electrical ingredient in aluminum oxide production which is quite sizable, requiring a contribution of kilowatts which in this case totals nearly 500,000. "Since the San Juan River hydroelectric powerplant can produce about 700,000 kilowatts, the enterprise would supplement this great aluminum production project in Valle de Cauca, the economic repercussions of which would be of extraordinary benefit, not only because of the production, but also the indirect results that it would have with the generation of employment and the promotion of the major aluminum industrial complex."

Morcillo came to Cali to take part in the signing of a contract whereby ECOMINAS is making a loan of 14 million pesos available to Cales del Valle for the modernization and expansion of the firm, in order to inaugurate a future production of 30,000 tons of lime per year.

According to technical studies, Cales del Valle will produce quicklime for industrial use with a calcium oxide content exceeding 92 percent, and will be able to hydrate it when requested to do so. As a by-product, it will be introduced to the agricultural market as a corrective agent for acid soils, and as limestone for the production of "impalpable" substances. For the future, consideration has been given to the possibility of producing calcareous aggregates for use in concrete.

2909

CSO: 3010/149

PINAR DEL RIO WORK DIRECTOR REVIEWS DIRECT HIRING SYSTEM

Havana BOHEMIA in Spanish 25 Sep 81 pp 28-31

[Report on interview with Pedro Lourdes Camacho, director of the People's Government Directorate of Labor in Pinar del Rio, by Raul Iazo; date and place not given]

[Text] About 3 years ago, when direct hiring of the labor force — and considering the obvious advantages that might be derived from such a system — was initiated in Pinar del Rio, chosen as a pilot province, some people began to show concern over certain negative effects this experiment could have on the economy, both on the enterprises and nationally.

First of all, these doubts had to do with the negative repercussion this new way of hiring the labor force, this employee-employer relation, could have on labor stability. Or more simply stated: There were some who thought that this way of hiring would give rise to a wave, a veritable tide, of changes of places of employment and occupations that would endanger the necessary stability of labor.

It is only fair to admit that, from a conceptual point of view, such concerns are fully justified since labor stability not only permits the enterprises — to cite merely one example — to qualitatively and quantitatively assure themselves the labor force needed to carry out their technical and economic production plans, but is also a decisive element in the development of job productivity, since one of the factors that helps raise the latter has to do with the skill, the know-how, workers continue to acquire in the course of their job tenure. There was complete unanimity of opinion on these repercussions on labor stability, the only remaining question being whether it would be secured through direct hiring.

Three years after the start of the "experiment" in our westernmost province, this unknown may finally be explicated and we may get an answer to the question as to whether this concern on the part of those who feel that way about it is confirmed or, on the contrary, whether their doubts are unfounded.

And nothing could better answer the question of those who initially demonstrated their concern than the words of Pedro Lourdes Camacho Velazco, labor director of the People's Government of Pinar del Rio Province.

"At first, this fear that an uncontrollable exodus of the labor force would be produced was not only exhibited at the level of the enterprises, but was also expressed by some sectors and branches of the economy and also began to acquire a certain

amount of "national" currency; some towns "thought" that they would be left without qualified workers. Despite these natural concerns, it is only fair to point out that in general, right from the start, direct hiring of the labor force was widely accepted in our province and that everyone did their best to see to it that this assignment would be successfully carried out," Pedro L. Camacho noted.

"Actually, in the course of the experiment such fears proved to be unjustified and, after it was concluded, in the report that covered all cases of direct hiring we showed that fluctuation had increased very slightly. As time has gone by, this fluctuation has become stabilized and there are fundamentally three reasons behind it: wages, distance from the place of employment and cancellation of contract by mutual agreement of the parties involved. In short, these are reasons we consider to be normal, ones that have always taken this form. Eighty percent of the transfers or exchanges are concentrated among 5 of the 35 reasons for labor fluctuations. We can say to you that direct hiring did not give rise to nor has it given rise to a new occurrence of fluctuation and, much less so, to a wave of mass migrations."

Farther on, our interviewee said that, since we had talked about the groundless arguments for a labor exodus which may have been brought on by direct hiring, other factors should also be pointed out which stood for security, even before they were introduced, which would contribute to or be factors in the retention of labor stability. "First of all," he said to us, "the very fact that both employees and employers establish their contract relations without intercession in terms of an "administrative assignment" guarantees both the opportunity to choose the appropriate labor option, one that is compatible with their mutual interests.

"In the course of this interview the fact has emerged that, in today tackling the problems of labor stability, it cannot be viewed as being solely influenced by direct hiring, but rather within the context of the aggregate of economic mechanisms that have been evolving through the Economic Planning and Management System, such as material incentives and the gradual introduction of the Wage Reform Program as well as the increase in the supply of goods through the parallel market, all of which tend to strengthen labor stability.

"The Wage Reform Program, for example, constitutes an economic mechanism that influences job tenure. A worker can change jobs much more easily than with the old system, but he must realize that, when he joins the new enterprise he is assigned to, he will occupy the bottom rung of the wage scale and lose his former wage."

Women's Labor Force

At times the fear that direct hiring of the labor force might limit women's opportunities for employment has also been exhibited. We need not give the reasons for this here: the false idea some people have who consider working women to be "problematic." "When we started the Pinar del Rio direct hiring experiment," Camacho noted, "32 percent of the province's labor force consisted of women; today that figure has risen to 34.5 percent and we have gone beyond the national average. Not only has the level of stability in jobs held by women increased, but also the percentage of women who quit their jobs has dropped. The additional fact we are about to give you may surprise you: Women's place of employment stability is greater than that of men. Of the 4.5-percent fluctuation rate evinced by the labor force as a whole, men are responsible for 5.4 percent and women 2.8 percent. I

repeat that all this must be viewed within the context of the aggregate of economic mechanisms that have been created these past few years and not be unilaterally regarded as the exclusive result of direct hiring, but the latter is a factor which plays an important role in terms of these favorable tendencies in the behavior of the labor force."

Paradoxes of Centralization

Excessive centralization and administrative controls turn themselves into hindrances to enterprise operations.

"With the old system of hiring," Camacho noted, "the labor force for an enterprise had to be requisitioned from the municipal directorate of labor through a system of applications, beginning with the FT25, the so-called "Job Application," requesting the directorate of labor to in centralized fashion assign the labor force; that is, the enterprise could not directly hire members of the reserve labor force. But now, the worker registers as a member of the labor reserve with the municipal labor directorates and is then free to hire on with any budgeted enterprise or unit."

Referring to the negative repercussion that such a system [the old one] had on enterprise operations, Camacho said that this centralized way of assigning the labor force caused enterprise applications to run up against many difficulties, on occasion serving as a justification for the failure to meet production quotas.

Farther on, Camacho pointed out that such obstacles not only had negative repercussions on the enterprises, but also on the normal and proper employment of the labor force at the national level.

"Before, the admission of workers from one town into another could, incorrectly so, be stopped. This interfered with more sensible and efficient utilization of labor resources seen as a whole, from a provincial point of view, which is the level we deal with...."

Then we said to Camacho that, contrary to what one might think, this centralized system of hiring the labor force represented an obstacle to a national distribution of labor resources with a policy of greater economic efficiency.

"Actually," he added, "due to existing natural conditions in the area, the 30 de Noviembre Sugar Mill had to be built at a location with a scanty labor force, especially as regards skilled labor, but an intensive campaign was conducted and medical technicians and university graduates were attracted to work on it. We are doing the same thing now for the Batalla de Cacarajioara Mill, which is in a practically uninhabited area. The very rigidity of the old system for hiring the labor force was a factor that somewhat dampened these possibilities. At times, when workers have been offered the option of transferring to another town, they have not done so. Some of them living in towns where the labor supply could not fully meet the demand have not transferred to others because they felt that, if they wanted to return to their places of employment at a later time, there would be obstacles to doing so. With the new system of direct hiring, the regulations establish specific periods of time, much shorter than before, for workers to be permitted to terminate the labor relation at their places of employment following notice of resignation. The enterprises also have the right to terminate the relation due to incompetence."

In answer to a question of the reporter's on the laws governing direct hiring of the labor force, Camacho replied that at the beginning of the Pinar del Rio "experiment" the available laws did not cover all aspects of the new system "and could not do so simply because we had no practical experience in the matter. One might say that laws were being made as the system required them."

"At first," the labor director added, "a very broadly-based series of meetings was conducted and at each place of employment the new hiring system was discussed and radio broadcasts were used to present round table discussions through which workers could get answers to their questions. We feel that this effort to inform the workers was one of the factors that contributed to the success of the direct hiring system. No one was taken by surprise with this new method of hiring. We feel that everything that was done in the way of providing public information on it was necessary and straightforward and that it would have been better if we had done much more."

Another point covered in the course of the interview had to do with the different methods of hiring the new system makes it possible to put into practice.

"Economic efficiency in the employment of the labor force is another distinctive feature of the direct hiring system. With the old system, many enterprises felt obliged to maintain a large complement of permanent personnel throughout the year. Enterprises engaged in the storing and processing of tobacco went so far as to maintain a complement of permanent personnel of about 15,000 workers throughout most of the year, whereas in reality that big a labor force is only needed for 6 or 7 months of the year. Over a period of 2 or 3 years now, these enterprises have been cutting down their complement of permanent personnel to approximately half of what it was. When the "peak" production period occurs, they hire their labor force for a specific period of time. I needn't tell you that this has resulted in more economic operation of these enterprises. But better yet, once this labor force is freed of its duties at a time when it is not needed for tobacco storage and processing operations, it can be used to perform other tasks, for example, in the cane-growing or food industries, in short, anywhere it is needed and when it is needed. Also, for seasonal jobs involving a very short and active period of time, a verbal contract without any kind of written agreement may be employed. One interesting feature of this method of hiring is that through it entire families: father and sons, etc., occasionally set up this kind of hiring arrangement to do a job involving these characteristics."

Perhaps one of the indices that best demonstrates the successes of direct hiring of the labor force is to be found in the statistics on labor litigation. In the first half of this year the percentage of cases of dismissal due to labor sanctions amounted to 8.3 percent in the province of Pinar del Rio, while during the same period last year they in general amounted to 10.7 percent. Grounds for dismissal under this indicator have been constantly dropping since the application of the direct hiring system. We may also take the letters received by the People's Government Directorate of Labor as an index of this assertion. Before, many of them dealt with labor cases, applications for transfers which budgeted enterprises or units refused to grant, etc. Today, the percentage of correspondence that has to do with this problem has greatly diminished and most of the letters concern other matters: social security, etc.

"The degree of centralization was really disproportionate," Camacho noted. "There were sectors of the economy in which transfers were centralized at the ministerial level; that is, to authorize the transfer of a worker the papers had to be signed by the official head of the sector. With direct hiring of the labor force, the very form of "transfer" disappears and the shift from one place of employment to another is achieved through hiring and discharging at the enterprises themselves."

"We don't want to offend you with cutting remarks," we said to the director of the People's Government Directorate of Labor, "but is it typical of the direct hiring of the labor force system to be possessed only of virtues or, on the contrary, has some problem arisen due to it?"

"Actually," Camacho replied, "we do have a problem which I would attribute to the lack of compatibility between the two systems rather than to something caused by direct hiring of the labor force. I am referring to the difficulties we are currently facing in terms of the system for handling workers' records and control over our labor reserve."

Expanding his explanation, the labor director noted that the system for handling workers' records has been made more cumbersome. "Before, workers' records were handled by transferring them from one enterprise to another; they went from enterprise to enterprise. With direct hiring of the labor force, all workers' records are routed through the Directorate of Labor; that is, if a worker is discharged at an enterprise, his record has to be sent to the Directorate of Labor. There it is filed and, when the worker hires on with another enterprise, it requisitions his record and it is sent to it."

Farther on, Camacho emphasized that this has considerably increased the work load of the municipal administrations and, since they do not have enough personnel to handle these matters, workers' records pile up. The time specified for these transactions is 5 days, but in fact this schedule is not being met. The labor director concluded that, in view of these difficulties, this procedure is being studied by the Central Agency and everything seems to point to the fact that the solution to the problem is to be found in the elimination of this intermediate step by seeing to it that workers' records are transmitted from enterprise to enterprise.

Camacho added that, in addition to the delay in handling workers' records, the current procedure also tends to inflate the labor reserve, somewhat as a result of these delays. This is due to the fact that, from the moment the municipal administration receives notice of a dismissal, it begins to check on or register the worker as a member of the labor reserve. At best, the worker starts working the day after submission of the dismissal notice, but, since the enterprises have a month to requisition records from the municipal administrations, during that month the labor reserve is artificially inflated in view of the fact that workers who are in fact working are listed as unemployed. Days lost through delays due to the above-mentioned reasons must be added to this month's time the enterprises have to requisition records.

At this point in the conversation Rene Cueto Hernandez, chief of the Labor Resources Department of the Directorate of Labor and Social Security, intervened, pointing out that, "in two or three samplings that have been made, it was determined that

in 48 percent of the cases investigated it could be shown that those workers listed in the labor reserve were actually working. No one keeps tabs on the labor reserve as we do in Cuba, where we want to know the man's name, where he is, etc., but in every country this determination of and control over the labor reserve is achieved through samplings. I think we ought to do something like this, because it is practically impossible to keep tabs on the labor reserve with the degree of detail with which we do so."

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CSO: 3010/165

COOPERATION WITH YEMEN DISCUSSED BY CIVIL ENGINEER

Havana BOHEMIA in Spanish 25 Sep 81 pp 66-67

[Report on interview with Daniel Iglesias, chief of the Cuban Civilian Cooperation Mission in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (RPDY), by special reporter Pedro Rioseco, in Aden; date not given]

[Text] In the city district of Khor Madzar, almost in the center of the scattered urban conglomerates which, as an aggregate, make up the city of Aden, the headquarters of the Cuban Civilian Cooperation Mission is located in a modest two-story house that is an office on the ground floor and our interviewee's living quarters on the upper floor. Restless of temperament and with a frank way of speaking, among his collaborators in this distant country Daniel Iglesias feels as he did when he was managing an enterprise in La Habana and, in this important struggle taking place thousands of miles from his homeland, his closest assistant is Carmita, who combines her duties as his wife with those of his secretary.

When Iglesias describes Cuban cooperation in the RPDY as "an important factor in this country's economic development," he does not do so thinking only of the number of specialists working here, but also of the function they are performing in the training and advancement of Yemeni technicians and specialists.

"Cuban cooperation has been of particular importance in the creation of the School of Medicine, in which 23 professors from the Victoria de Giron Higher Institute of Medical Sciences are with their knowledge contributing to the training of the first 52 Yemeni doctors, who will graduate next year and have completed their entire course of study in this country with the aid of tens of Cuban professors who have conducted the different courses. Other important fields are: poultry farming, which has made it possible to create a gene pool adapted to the characteristics of the country and in which field several comrades are working in the provinces of Aden and Abian; the medical service brigade, which is responsible for the basic operation of the Lajeh Provincial Hospital; artificial insemination, which is being introduced into the country's cattle-raising industry through the efforts of Cuban technicians who work on cattle ranches at Nuevo Lajeh and Abian. In addition, other comrades serve as advisers on tobacco plantations at Abian, work at organizing transportation in Aden and through their experience help capital city builders.

"The attitude of the collaborators," Iglesias went on, "has been excellent. They are simultaneously advisers and performers and they face the country's difficulties in a spirit of resolving problems despite limited resources."

Answering a question of ours on the assimilation of advisory staff members into the Yemeni community, the head of the cooperative mission with visible enthusiasm told us that "our partners are very receptive and both experts and workers and the people in general have real affection for the Cubans. Utilization of this collaboration has not yet reached the degree we would like it to, but the achievements of these 9 years of cooperation are tangible and we can see how utilization of our specialists and technicians is improving day by day."

Aware of the Third Conference of the Cuban-Yemeni Intergovernmental Commission, recently held in Aden, during which the new agreement that governs cooperation for next year was signed, we asked Iglesias about the results of the conference. "They were extremely positive," he replied, "characterized by a strong revolutionary spirit on the part of both parties, by our country's solidary interest in aiding the RPDY and they fell within the framework of the close ties of brotherhood that link both governments and parties."

"In this agreement, in several fields we substituted an increase in the number of scholarships for the training of Yemeni technicians in Cuba for from 3 to 6 months, which was not the most productive way of doing it due to language difficulties, such scholarships being much more useful inasmuch as they provide for the training of high-level specialists who on their return can better help in the development of the country."

"Prospects? A continuation of the effort expended over these 9 years and increased activity in some areas."

The answer to the question as to what would be the biggest achievement of Cuban cooperation came before we could finish asking the question: "The School of Medicine. It is a scientific, political and economic achievement. The graduation of the first Yemeni doctors in this small, underdeveloped country will be an event for the whole Arab world, in which this project was viewed with much scepticism. The RPDY Government and Party wanted to have highly-trained doctors and they are going to succeed in training them fully in this country. Furthermore, as of this year there will be graduations every year and more each year than the year before."

As for the language barrier, which people in many places described to us as the major difficulty in adapting themselves to the new effort, our interviewee said that "it will be overcome here, first, because of the enormous interest displayed by the internationalists who come here and the Yemenis who teach them the indispensable rudiments of the Arabic language so that they can walk down the street and establish basic communication with the local population and, second, because a course in English, which is attended by all coworkers and in which those comrades who master the language become teachers, is systematically taught here. The attendance and utilization of these courses is also a job for the party and the brigade leaders, since English is our operational language and in view of the fact that this was a British colony, most of the population speaks English."

"One point worth stressing is the role competition has played and is playing," Iglesias added. Among our brigades there is an internal competition in which, just as in Cuba, the best technician, rank-and-file worker and assistant of the month, quarter and year are chosen. There is also a collective competition in

which execution of the brigade work plan, attendance and punctuality, Cuban collaborators' inventiveness and the initiatives they have put into practice as well as volunteer work are considered.

"Last year the best brigade was the teaching brigade (medicine) headed by Prof Sandalio Duran, which was also the winner for the first quarter of this year. In the second quarter top place went to the medical service brigade at Lajeh."

"And what do they do with their leisure time?" we asked, as we enjoyed a cup of coffee.

"There are recreational activities in the houses the aid personnel live in; they have celebrated the anniversaries of the collectives and the most important dates of our revolution and that of the Yemenis; they are given money to go to the movies once a week and, each week that we receive Cuban films or others are lent to us by socialist embassies, showings are organized at the embassy. Oh! One item that is very important is that every Friday — which in the Arab world is equivalent to our Sunday — all aid personnel meet at the Club Siboney, which the Cubans control at Bureika Beach on the outskirts of Aden and which was rebuilt and rejuvenated with the volunteer labor of all our comrades and is run each week by one of the aid brigades, which makes the necessary preparations for spending a pleasant day at the beach.

"Moreover, we occasionally hold competitive sporting events among the Cubans, in which the Yemenis also participate. We engage in handball, basic gymnastics, ping pong, chess, dominoes and, of course, recreational swimming at the beach."

Notwithstanding our experiences during frequent visits to the houses Cuban aid personnel live in, we decided to ask their chief representative about our fellow Cubans' living and working conditions. There was no delay in answering the expected question.

"As a matter of fact, we wanted to talk about that. The Yemeni revolutionary government is making a great effort to see to it that the conditions under which the Cuban internationalists live in the six big houses available to us are good, and they really are. All the houses have television sets, refrigerators, air conditioning in each apartment and tape recorders as well as help from Yemeni employees in the preparation of meals — which are very good — laundry service for bed linen and facilities for maintaining personal cleanliness. In addition, every brigade has transportation available to it, assigned to it by the Yemenis, and the country pays each collaborator a small salary for his personal expenses, independently of the Cuban supplies the cooperation office provides them with. Actually, considering the fact that this is a country engaged in a tough struggle to free itself of poverty and underdevelopment, we must say that the Yemeni Government is taking care of and extending priority to the Cuban aid workers' living and working conditions and that it is doing everything in its power to make them feel at home."

11,466

CSO: 3010/165

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES EXPECT ARMY TO GUARANTEE ELECTIONS

Suazo Cordova's Statement

San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 13 Oct 81 p 2

[Text] Tegucigalpa--Presidential candidate Roberto Suazo Cordova said that he was satisfied with the talk that he had had with the Honduran president and head of the armed forces as well as with some members of the armed forces' higher council.

He made these statements to a broadcasting station in the capital without going into great detail on the nature of what had been discussed at the meeting, the subject of so much speculation in political circles. Rather, Roberto Suazo Cordova limited himself to stating that the talk had been about the national problem.

"I feel gratified with this dialogue and I believe that from now on such talks must become a permanent feature since we have barely 50 days left before the Honduran people will exercise their wishes at the ballot box," the Liberal Party candidate noted.

Suazo Cordova added that the armed forces have reiterated their decision to guarantee the elections of 29 November 1981, as mandated by the Electoral and Political Organizations Law.

He expressed his faith and confidence in the Honduran president who is also head of the armed forces as well as in the chiefs and officers of the Honduran Army who will know how to abide by the trilogy of honor, loyalty, and sacrifice "so that the Honduran people may peacefully proceed to cast their ballots for the candidate of their choice on election day," he added.

Finally, Suazo Cordova invited the backers of the Liberal Party to a rally at the Villa de La Lima in the next few days so that they may approve 29 November as the election date.

Padilla on Army Commitment

San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 13 Oct 81 p 5

[Text] Tegucigalpa, D.C.--The presidential candidate of the Honduran [Christian] Democratic Party [PDC], Dr Hernan Corrales Padilla, issued an energetic appeal in this capital to the civic and democratic conscience of the Honduran Army, reminding it of its pledge to be the guarantor of the democratic process which will move Honduras to a constitutional order.

The political leader, alluding to the significance of the army as a responsible institution, rejected any possibility of a coup d'etat before or after the elections.

He also used the argument that only on very rare occasions could one accept that the armed forces should intervene in a country's constitutional life, as has been evident in some Latin American countries.

Corrales Padilla said specifically that "this happens exclusively in cases where really significant abuses occur."

"At this time," he added, "the armed forces must guarantee that the principles of justice, liberty, and democracy will be met so that the electoral process may be successful."

He reaffirmed that the above "involves the best desires and expression of the loftiest patriotic sentiment in the sense that it is not a matter of seeking negative situations to justify the intervention that may break with the constitutional order but rather of correcting errors in time."

He stated that he was unable to find any justification for a coup d'etat considering that the elections are to be held as soon as possible, and that no one should strive to undermine the process to justify negative acts "when I say that only in the most extreme circumstances should the armed forces intervene in the political life of countries, something we do not seek for Honduras. Rather, we desire to follow a positive path and we must all work for the good of the nation."

Electoral Outlook

The PDC leader noted that the electoral outlook "depends essentially on the level of diligence and patriotism used in the solution of problems inherent in the honesty of the national elections."

"The entire nation knows 'ad nauseam' that balloting cannot be completely honest except in the very long run," he said.

He added that changes must occur in the country to make possible a modification in the existing situation and for that reason the PDC stresses that the important goal that must be realized is the greatest possible honesty in the balloting.

Criticizing electoral fraud, Corrales Padilla also said that "no one must believe that honesty in the balloting is total or extensive honesty that satisfied everyone but that this is the share of the sacrifice which the young parties make in the new electoral process."

He noted that he believed like all Hondurans that the only valid way to maintain peace is through the elections scheduled for 29 November.

Army Confirms Support

San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 12 Oct 81 p 4

[Text] Tegucigalpa--The Public Relations Directorate of the Armed Forces communicates the following to the Honduran people:

1. That the chief of the armed forces and members of the armed forces' higher council are holding meetings with the leaders of the registered political parties taking part in the present electoral process to communicate to them their concern about some irregularities reported in the national press and which, if they are not rectified in time, could frustrate the aspirations of the citizens to participate in a free and honest election without maneuvers or attitudes that frustrate the popular will.
2. That the armed forces reiterate before the Honduran people their determination to guarantee the development of the electoral process within the framework established by the Constitution and the Electoral and Political Organizations Law, in keeping with the schedule already drawn up and the provisions emanating from the national elections court.
3. That as has already been stated on repeated occasions, responsibility for the success or failure of the present electoral process is the business of the competing party executives and that the armed forces will support the result of same so long as it is held freely and honestly and conforms to the law.
4. In regard to the reports relating to changes or restructuring of the government executive, the armed forces as an institution are not involved in it given that the former is an individual prerogative of the constitutional Honduran president.

Tegucigalpa, D.C., 10 October 1981

Commander Avila

San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 12 Oct 81 p 9

[Text] La Ceiba--"There is a perfectly synchronized campaign technically organized by international communism to discredit the security setup and the armed forces in the eyes of the citizenry," Col Roberto Martinez Avila, commander of the 4th Infantry Battalion, said in his official speech at the celebration activities connected with the 18th anniversary of FUSEP [Public Security Force] in this port.

Martinez Avila went on to state--"with equal energy"--that "FUSEP is not a repressive organ but must act with energy in the struggle against crime, misdeeds, violations of the law, social misfits, and against the extreme left which receives orders to execute international tasks.

"When FUSEP is not active, the citizenry demands its presence and accuses it of ineptness and inefficiency. However, when it acts, generally it is criticized by some sectors. However, the police must act because its immediate duty, let us repeat, is connected with the safety of individuals."

After making a conscientious analysis of the protective effort made by the police across the country in an attempt to halt crimes for the good of the people, the colonel came down hard on the enemies of law and order and national tranquility when he stated that "it is now fashionable for the extremists of the left to accuse and point to the police as a repressive organ and it is charged with responsibility in the kidnapping of citizens. Whenever one of them disappears the DNI [National Investigations Directorate] or the police commandant is directly mentioned."

Subsequently, Martinez Avila vigorously leveled his guns against all the social misfits when he said that "it is necessary to know that for a long time now youths and grown men have disappeared from our cities and towns and these activists of international Marxism, without saying anything to their relatives out of fear or for the sake of safety, cross our borders into neighboring countries, at times to join the guerrilla movement and specialize in sabotage and terrorism and to train in organized and professional crime.

"And when these men and youths are missing from among their families, the communists themselves organize street demonstrations accusing FUSEP and the DNI of being responsible for the disappearance of their comrades. They thereby strive to deceive public opinion, to generate a smokescreen for their colleagues who are training abroad and to make their relatives believe that they have lost their brothers, sons, or close kin because of police brutality."

They Arrange Their Own Kidnappings

At the close of his presentation the head of the 4th Infantry Battalion went even further in his statements when he said that "there are wives, mothers, and sisters who scream and accuse FUSEP of causing the disappearance of their relatives. Some of them do it because they are certainly unaware of the fact that their kin have joined the international guerrilla movement or because, knowing the truth, they conceal it and, cooperating in subversion, also cast a veil of mystery which does not exist but with which they try to fool domestic and international public opinion, winning for themselves the sympathy and sorrow of the people.

"In Honduras we see the communists arranging their own kidnappings in order to discredit the Public Security Force which avoids these tactics. The people who are not used to such gimmicks come to believe that there is undoubtedly repression in the country and that human rights are violated."

The comments of the distinguished officer, member of the Armed Forces' Higher Council, are obviously a clarion call for all of Honduras' democratic sectors which still continue to believe that we are sitting on beds of roses.

Martínez Avila also made evident the tactics of the enemies of law and order and social peace when he accused them of arranging their own kidnappings and of joining the guerrilla groups of the area and moving to other countries to receive guerrilla training which, without having to be wise men or prophets, we know they will put into practice in our beloved homeland.

2662

CSO: 3010/142

ATTITUDES IN CURACAO ON INDEPENDENCE QUESTION

Amsterdam ELSEVIERS WEEKBLAD in Dutch 10 Oct 81 p 19

[Article by Armand Costes: "In Curacao, it Is Hoped that the Delay Will Lead to Abandonment"]

[Text] When it became clear that Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Social Affairs and Employment Den Uyl would also be in charge of Antillean affairs in the new Van Agt administration, a slight panic broke out in Curacao. People well remembered his party colleague Franssen who, during the Den Uyl administration, threatened to send the date for independence by registered mail. While the people in Curacao are not too worried about the withdrawal of Aruba from the Antillean association, the fear of a speedy independence is widespread. This initial inhibition prevents the community from preparing itself or even from daring to venture into a "broad social discussion" on the subject.

For years, the island of Curacao has been on the brink of bankruptcy, but nobody seems to be particularly worried about this. The question of the independence of the Netherlands Antilles, with or without Aruba, did not seem to appreciably trouble the people I met either. However, they were noticeably relieved about the position of the new Dutch government, to the effect that independence cannot be imposed and could quite well wait another 10 years.

Antilleans do not start talking about the question of independence of their own accord. But if a Dutch visitor, if need be, wants to broach the subject, then he is quickly told that the imposition of independence is a colonial phenomenon. The inhabitants of Curacao believe that delay will lead to abandonment, and as long as that threshold is not in sight there is no need to talk about it, there is no need to make preparations or to worry about it either.

PvdA [Labor Party] House member Franssen may well have been the Dutch politician most hated in the Antilles. During the Den Uyl administration he announced that, if the Antillean government could not set a date itself by which independence was to be achieved, then the Netherlands would send it the date of independence by registered mail. The people in Curacao consider this real colonialist behavior, even though it can be assumed that Franssen was actually aiming for decolonization. But even in decolonization, one may reason in a colonialist manner.

When it became known that Den Uyl would be dealing with Antillean affairs within the new Van Agt administration, some people in Curacao did become nervous. But the statement from the PvdA, to the effect that a systematic process toward independence would not have to be completed before 1990, once again calmed them down.

Initial Inhibition

The initial inhibition concerning independence prevails in all political, economic and social ranks in Curacao. Employers, trade unions, left wing and right wing parties, all of them are saturated with this fear. If Aruba wants so much to be separate, then nobody in Curacao would want to prevent this as long as Curacao, and possibly the other four islands, can maintain the ties with the Netherlands.

In the past, progressive individuals were sometimes still willing to proclaim their support for independence, while nobody actually dares to oppose it openly. A good example is current Prime Minister Don Martina. In 1974, this leader of the MAN [New Antilles Movement], in the opposition, said: "As far as the date by which we want to become independent goes, it must be immediately and clearly said that we do not agree with the view of the Antillean government, to the effect that if possible this should be postponed until the year 2000. Such a position does not motivate our people to become aware of the responsibility awaiting us in the near future and the efforts they will have to make. There is no objection to setting a date, in the short or the long term, provided that we know where we stand. This stimulates self-industry and provides opportunities for our population to prepare itself in a purposeful way."

Come Around

Meanwhile, as prime minister, Don Martina has come around considerably and now sees 1990 as the earliest possible date for achieving independence. Personally, Don Martina would still like to start a preparation process, but he lacks the support of other political parties and of employers and trade unions to this effect. Even a so-called "broad social discussion" about independence is not possible in Curacao because people do not dare to tackle the problem.

This should not, however, lead us to conclude that the politicians in Curacao and their rank and file are all that happy with the ties with the Netherlands via the Statute. In 1974, Don Martina already said: "We want independence in any case, because when we carefully read and study the current statute, we find that our own development is tied hand and foot to the Netherlands. And the interests of the kingdom are the interests of the Netherlands." Today, Don Martina will no longer express himself this radically, but criticism of the Netherlands remains a major line in Antillean politics. Consequently, nobody dares to present himself as an opponent in principle of independence, whereas the rare proponents of quick independence also die a rapid political death on this island, which sets the tone for the politics of the Netherlands Antilles minus Aruba.

During my visit, there was a storm of protest against the measure taken by the Van Agt/Wiegel administration to freeze the Dutch development monies. It is true that for years the Antilles have not been able to come up with a sufficient number of projects to completely use up the available funds, but as soon as the budget is reduced they raise a hue-and-cry. The conflicts between the KLM [Royal Dutch Airlines] and the ALM [Antillean Airlines] are not seen as a result of Dutch colonial policy either.

What would actually be the difference between full independence and the current autonomy under the Statute? In the socio-economic area, the Antilles have had administrative autonomy since 1954, while Dutch financial aid is limited to projects which are approved by the Netherlands according to fixed criteria. In terms of domestic policy, the Antilles are completely independent, so that actually only defense and foreign policy are dependent of the Netherlands.

Primarily defense will remain a ticklish issue in the discussions on future independence. Barely 60 kilometers away from the coast of Venezuela, the inhabitants of Curacao, as well as those of Aruba as a matter of fact, believe that the Netherlands cannot simply give up its responsibility for their defense.

In spite of the fact that, since its independence, Venezuela has experienced more interference in its domestic affairs from the Netherlands Antilles than the other way round, there is the fear that the oil rich neighbor country will engage in strong power politics as soon as the Antilles (or Aruba) become independent and no longer receive Dutch military support. This fear is fed further by the plans to introduce participation by the Venezuelan state oil company into the very important Shell refinery in Curacao.

Prosperity

The relatively high prosperity in Curacao is largely derived from this refinery, which produces more than 50 percent of the island's income, while Aruba is equally dependent on the large Esso refinery in Sint Nicolaas. Esso also has plans for Venezuelan participation, in order to guarantee the viability of the refinery.

The current malaise on the free market for oil products and the small margins for the refineries could directly affect the results of both large plants and have a strong influence on jobs and on the national income. In a certain sense, the Antilles have a kind of windfall economy, whereby ample profits are made during periods of growth in international trade and industry, but whereby recessions are felt with extra force. For years they have been striving for a reduced dependency on oil refining. In terms of the development of tourism, this has succeeded reasonably well, although more successfully in Aruba and Sint Maarten than in Curacao.

In the early seventies, it appeared that electronic assembly would become another pillar of the Antillean economy. Texas Instruments and Rockwell established large plants in Curacao, but departed as quickly as they had come. As a matter of fact, wage costs are not particularly low in the Netherlands Antilles, at least not when compared with other conquered countries in the Third World. The membership in the EC and the tax holiday, which had been going on for 10 years, were attractive incentives for establishment, but the recession in the electronics industry resulted in those marginal industries being the very first ones to be rejected.

Next to traditional international trade and contraband, there was a development of the registration of "off-shore companies," related to the avoidance of Dutch profit taxes. Hundreds of paper enterprises are on file at the Smeets notary public office and at a few other registrars' offices. This administrative activity produces large revenues for the Antilles, even though it involves only a few jobs. And yet, the oil refining remains the most important pillar of the economy, partly due also to indirect activities such as ship repair in the large dry dock. This is why the influence of Venezuela as large supplier of crude oil, could be of decisive significance, even with future independence.

Unavoidable

In the end, financial participation of Venezuela in the oil refinery of Curacao seems unavoidable in order to safeguard the future of this plant and of the related jobs. In spite of the fact that the Antillean government wants to act as a third partner -- next to Shell and the Venezuelan state oil company --, many inhabitants of Curacao are worriedly wondering what guarantees there are against possible political influence by Venezuela. They are afraid that irregularities in Curacao, such as for example a lengthy strike at the refinery, could serve as an excuse for military intervention by Venezuela to safeguard its interests. What scares many inhabitants of Curacao is the possibility that Venezuela might extend its continuing protection to the island and that the black population would have to live like second class citizens in Venezuela, where the whites have always remained in charge.

Having been autonomous for 21 years, it is practically too late for the Antilles to become integral territory of the Netherlands, as Cayenne, Guadeloupe and Martinique are of France. And yet, there are Antilleans who would prefer this to independence, if only because of the applicability of the social legislation. Indeed, the inhabitants of these French territories do not have to emigrate to France in order to be eligible for support.

From an economic point of view, it might even be cheaper to declare the Dutch social legislation applicable to the 250,000 Antilleans, rather than to risk a large scale emigration to the Netherlands. But it is already too late for this alternative of full integration with the Netherlands, without administrative autonomy. The Statute does not seem to be a lasting solution either. What then? Independence without military support and without broad financial guarantees cannot be achieved. Then maybe maintain the Statute after all, but without Aruba? This seems to be the preference of most of the inhabitants of Curacao I talked to. In their culture, delays usually lead to abandonment, and this is precisely what they are hoping for.

8463

CSO: 3105/20

FINANCE MINISTER DISCUSSES TAX REFORMS PLANNED

Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 14 Oct 81 p 10

[Text] The minister of finance, Joaquin Cuadra Chamorro, yesterday reported that the JGRN [Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction] is studying a tax reform package.

Among these proposals is one that would favor citizens with personal incomes under 250,000 cordobas a year (approximately 20,000 cordobas a month). The tax rate for these people would be lower than the present rate, but the minister did not give the percentage of the reduction.

Technicians, professionals, and some levels of employees would benefit from this reform.

The Minister Cuadra reported that starting at this amount, the tax rate on personal income will rise progressively, reaching 65 percent for the highest income levels.

He added that taxes on business and industry will be maintained at 40 percent in order to stimulate their activities, and also because that level has produced results which the government deems acceptable.

The minister of finance also said that it is estimated that this year the inflation rate will reach 20 percent, a level considered acceptable in comparison with worldwide inflation rates.

According to Cuadra, Nicaragua will have one of the lowest inflation rates in Latin America. He emphasized that the policy of providing state subsidies for important services such as transport, energy, and water, and for basic foodstuffs, will help to keep the inflation rate down. This is not done in many countries.

He further reported that the income tax collections until September exceeded the goals set by 50 million cordobas.

Asked about the conditions in which private enterprise is operating, Mr Cuadra said that if the income tax revenues are used as an index or reference, "private enterprise is doing very well," because if incomes have risen, this means that their profits are higher. "If private businessmen are complaining, it is because they want to complain," he said.

He announced that it is believed that the expected tax revenues for 1981 will be exceeded, as they were last year, because a record coffee harvest is expected, along with an increase in exports of various items.

7679

CSO: 3010/189

MARENCO DESCRIBES DOMESTIC TRADE MINISTRY'S TASKS

Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 18 Oct 81 pp 1, 10

[Text] We have had to rebuild our nation under the most difficult economic, political, and military conditions in Central America and in the world, but despite the present state of emergency, our economic situation is qualitatively and quantitatively superior to that of the other countries of Central America. This was made clear in the remarks made today by the minister of domestic trade, Dioniso Marengo, in speaking to almost all of the workers of his agency, who met together at the Altamira movie theater in a general assembly.

For the first time in 2 years, we can say that we have a sufficient quantity of beans, corn, wheat flour, and rice to meet the needs of Nicaraguan consumers, and few countries in the world can now make the same claim, added Marengo.

This assembly was named in honor of Pedro Arauz Palacios, and was held on the fourth anniversary of his glorious death. Its purpose was to inform the workers about the present situation of the nation and about the strategic role that the national food distribution program will play in the days to come.

The minister said that the greatest pressure of this state of emergency is falling on MICGIN [Domestic Trade Ministry] and on its subsidiary agencies, ENABAS [National Staple Foods Enterprise] and CORCOP [People's Commerce Corporation]. For this reason, these agencies will only have room for those workers who are in agreement with the current process of transformation toward a more developed and more just society, and who are also prepared to work efficiently and with a spirit of self-sacrifice in order to move forward.

"This is the situation: either we will be efficient or we will not be able to overcome the crisis. That is why we will not tolerate laziness, fear, or lack of cooperation."

"Any worker unwilling to shoulder his historic responsibilities will probably be better off working somewhere else," said the minister.

At another point in his speech, Marenco outlined the characteristics of our industry, concluding that though we are barely an "economic speck" on a world scale, we have the aspirations of a giant.

Countering Dishonesty

Because of the mental distortions induced by propaganda and the frenzied debt spiral, this country has in the past lived well beyond its means, "but now we are going to face reality," he said.

We must go back, as he said, "to the bottom line," and learn to live well with what we have, while trying to improve through work and production: this is the only way we can move forward while other countries are sinking under the weight of misguided economic policies.

He assured the workers that shopwindows will not be left empty before Christmas, because many merchants had arranged for their imports before the severe currency restrictions went into effect.

There is a full-scale program underway to stimulate the production of toys and gifts made in Nicaragua, and there is also a government program to import Christmas goods in the amount of \$15 million.

Against the Bureaucracy

Mr Marenco recognized the harsh struggle that is being fought against the evils of the bureaucracy, and the fact that little success has yet been achieved in this campaign.

He did say, though, that at least in the area of domestic trade, "we can no longer continue to face the crisis with words alone; we must take realistic action."

"We must go as far as necessary to help to resolve our problems," he pointed out.

In this regard he announced that starting now MICOIN's greatest emphasis will be placed on the development and good operation of the regionals, with the highest priority being assigned to those in the border area.

"Our best workers and technical cadres will be used to fill in the gaps that are found in ENABAS, in CORCOP, and in the regionals; MICOIN itself will remain small, as a sort of nucleus of thought, guidance, and analysis," he explained.

In closing, we must mention the announcement he made that next month, according to present calculations, our own toothpaste factory will be in operation.

NATIONAL BUDGET FOR 1979, 1981 COMPARED

Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 19 Oct 81 pp 1, 14

[Text] An interesting comparison between the national budgets for 1981 and for 1979 was made yesterday at the MDN [Nicaraguan Democratic Movement] program by Mr Anibal Arana and other party leaders.

Despite inflation, which must be taken into consideration in dealing with this type of analysis, the conclusions shed a great deal of light, enabling the Nicaraguan people to evaluate the efficiency of their current government administration.

Overall Figures

Mr Arana began by comparing the overall budget for 1979, which he called "yesterday's (Somozist) budget" with today's budget, the 1981 budget, which is under the responsibility of the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] and the JGRN [Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction].

Yesterday's budget for 1979 came to a total figure of 3.409 billion cordobas, while today's budget is 8.793 billion; this is a 160 percent increase, or 2.6 times more.

Health

The Somozist budget allocated barely 196 million cordobas to health, while the current budget lists a figure of 1.052 billion, a 440 percent increase.

When we consider that over 5 times more is being spent on health than in the past, it is to be expected that if efficiency were maintained, health services should now be 5 times better than before. "In this matter, the people are the ones who should know the correct answer," said the MDN officials.

Education

For education, the present government has earmarked almost 3 times the amount of what the Somozist dictatorship spent. In the past, they spent 383 million cordobas, compared with 1.075 billion now being spent on education.

Nonetheless, we would have to see if this increase of 180 percent for education has truly been translated into increased opportunities for the people, one of the MDN leaders said. "And above all, if this is the type of education the Nicaraguan people want."

Construction

In the days of Somozism, the construction budget was 340 million cordobas; it is now 1.055 billion. This is an increase of 210 percent, and over 3 times the absolute amount.

If we add in to this the budget of the ministry of transportation, which in the Somozist period was combined with construction, we have a total of 1.498 billion cordobas, or 340 percent more than in the past.

"Really," said the MDN officials, "perhaps more jobs have been generated, but without efficiency, perhaps this has just meant more bureaucracy."

Defense

The ministry of defense of the Somozist government had a budget of 375 million cordobas, while now defense has 945 million, 2.5 times more, an increase of 150 percent.

The former ministry of the interior, which was then called the ministry of government, spent 108 million cordobas annually, while now the MININT [Ministry of the Interior] spends 756 million. This is 7 times more, and a percentage increase of 600 percent.

The JGRN

The JGRN, which is the equivalent of what the national governing council was in the past, spends 149 million cordobas a year, compared with 47 million spent during the Somozist administration.

"In addition," said Arana, "there is a budget item called 'incidental expenses' for the JGRN which comes to 249 million cordobas; we assume this is in the hands of the junta, since there is no specific destination indicated for it."

Justice

The administration of justice in yesterday's budget cost 17 million cordobas, while today the supreme court is allocated 36 million, and another 21 million goes to the ministry of justice.

This means a percentage increase for the administration of justice of 230 percent, and an absolute increase in monetary resources of 3.3 times.

State Council

An admirable exception to this increased spending is in the State Council which, according to the information presented by the MDN staff, now spends 4.9 million cordobas, while the Somozist congress spent 31 million a year.

The State Council has slashed spending from the days of its Somozist counterpart organization by 670 percent, almost 8 times less. As we know, the council members are not paid salaries, nor are there other benefits as in the days of the dictatorship.

Source of This Information

This comparative analysis between the 1979 and 1981 budgets was based on the two budgets.

Mr Arana did point out, however, that it is not easy to obtain information about the present budget. He indicated that this information was supplied to the MDN by a source whose efforts they greatly appreciate.

7679

CSO: 3010/189

STATE COUNCIL APPROVES PARDON, AMNESTY LAW

Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 15 Oct 81 pp 1, 5

[Text] The state council yesterday agreed to approve the pardon law. This measure is considered exemplary on an international basis, and is almost unprecedented in Latin America. This law establishes a process for obtaining pardons, commutations, and reductions of sentences for war prisoners and other offenders.

Requests for pardons, commutations, or reductions of sentences must be filed with the CPPDH [Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights] which, once the cases have been investigated, will send its opinion to the JGRN [Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction], which will then send its findings on to the state council, so that the representatives of the people may decide.

The certification of the minutes of the state council session in which the pardon, commutation, or reduction of sentence or any other resolution in this regard is decided will be considered sufficient for the judicial authorities to take action.

Council Prepares Regulation

The legal regulation will soon be drafted by the justice commission and the first secretary of the state council, who will be assisted by the JGRN, the supreme court, the CPPDH, and the ministry of justice.

Although the application of the pardon law is the exclusive right of the state council, whenever the council is in recess the JGRN will be empowered to exercise this authority. Article four of the law further provides that if a request for pardon, commutation, or reduction of sentence is denied, the request may only be renewed during the next legislative session.

Originally the bill presented to parliament by the JGRN was entitled "General Amnesty Law," but as this bill grants the state council the power to decide on commutations or reductions of sentences as well, Commander Dora Maria Tellez proposed the name of "Pardon Law," which was in the end approved by the members of the council.

Nunez: Generosity Has Been Written Into the Law

Guillermo Selva of the PLI [Independent Liberal Party], Thelma Uriarte of ANDEN [National Association of Nicaraguan Teachers], Pedro Perez of the ATC [Rural Workers Association], Filemon Hernandez of the CDS [Sandinista Defense Committees], Rafael Solis of the FFAA [Armed Forces], Domingo Sanchez of the PSN [Nicaraguan Socialist Party], Jose Maria Ruiz of the Ecumenical Axis, and other representatives emphasized the humanitarian nature of this law and spoke of the international impact it will have as the ratification of the FSLN's [Sandinist National Liberation Front] policy of generosity.

"Generosity has been written into our laws and regulations," said the president of the state council, Revolutionary Commander Carlos Nunez Tellez, who termed it historic and of vital significance, not only for the Nicaraguan people but for all Latin Americans.

Nonetheless he told the council members that the law requires that they have a more direct relationship with the masses, for in the final instance, it is the masses who will decide about amnesties, commutations, or reductions of sentences. He also said that in the past, many of the persons who were pardoned were later implicated in the activities of counterrevolutionary gangs.

Worldwide Admiration for Revolutionary Generosity

Leonte Canales, Allan Zambrana, and Federico Lopez also took part in the debates; Lopez proposed that the regulation for the application of the law be prepared by the state council; this proposal was approved by the full session.

The head of the CPPDH, Leonte Herdocia--who was present at the session--expressed his appreciation for the decision by the state council, and termed the session historic.

He said that Nicaragua has aroused the world's admiration for its generosity which has been recognized at the United Nations, by the International Commission of Jurists, by Amnesty International, and the CIDH [Inter-American Commission on Human Rights].

Finally, speaking in the name of the CPPDH, Herdocia pledged to take the most appropriate action on requests for pardons, commutations, or reductions of sentences handled by this institution, as provided by article two of the law, so that they will be sent rapidly to the JGRN and to the state council, along with all the information needed for making just and humanitarian decisions.

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ARISMENDI VIEWS APPOINTMENT OF NEW PRESIDENT

East Berlin HORIZONT in German Vol 14 No 41, 1981 pp 25-26

[Interview with Rodney Arismendi, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Uruguay, published in INFORMACIONES URUGUAYAS, 2 September 1981]

[Text] On 1 September 1981 Lieutenant General Gregorio Alvarez, who was appointed the new head of state by the military government in Uruguay, assumed his office. On this occasion Rodney Arismendi, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Uruguay, granted an interview in Moscow to Soviet journalists and representatives of the international press. A slightly abridged version of the interview is published below.

[Question] What was the political situation when the change of presidents took place in Uruguay?

R. Arismendi: This change took place at a time of increased political mobilization as a consequence of the plebiscite of November 1980 (on 30 November approximately 54 percent of the voters expressed their opposition to a constitutional draft submitted by the military--HORIZONT), which was an indication of the opinion of the nation and represented a climax of the work that had been done by oppositional forces during the last few years. Simultaneously new political processes were set in motion which demonstrate the people's aspirations for changes. The result of the plebiscite was proof of the defeat of the dictatorship, of abhorrence for their brutal repression and their economic policy, for their internal isolation and worldwide condemnation. The decision by the people shattered the timetable of the institutionalization of the regime. Resistance and protest continued: it was agreed that a minimal program of opposition was necessary. The realization became more and more apparent that without a real democratic opening there would be no way out of the crisis. All these things had an effect on the military, they increased conflicts and the result was the removal of high military officers, who definitely represented fascist and corrupt attitudes.

The protest increased, the political latitude became larger--particularly for the most important circles of the traditional parties--and new press organs were formed to reflect the opinion of these circles against the background of the consistent struggle by the working class and the people.

[Question] Opinions were expressed that there were no fundamental changes.

R. Arismendi: In my opinion it is wrong to say that nothing is happening or that we are only dealing with a maneuver or a variation of the timetable. Certainly, the military is there--the most reactionary segment--and circles that have come to power through criminal channels or legally and who resist any kind of progress. At the most they are willing to make small concessions. Consequently, we are still a long way from a real opening, and it will continue in this manner as long as the president is appointed by the military and for a long period, as long as the cabinet is made up of ministers like the minister of economy and finance, whose policies benefit only banks and foreign capital and who is responsible for the economic and social drama, as long as there are people in the Council of State who are not representative and some of whom have a sordid past. Nevertheless, it is wrong to believe that nothing is happening. The fact is that the concessions are limited and inadequate which the regime had to make in view of the struggle and the sacrifices by the working class and the attitudes evident in other circles of the population. Still, whoever thinks that nothing is happening denies the enormous power of the people and their struggle through all these years. It is the decisive factor for the political mobilization and also for the fact that the regime has to make compromises.

[Question] What is the significance of Gregorio Alvarez' appointment and what are the measures that will provide a real opening?

R. Arismendi: The appointment of Lieutenant Alvarez is already a significant event in itself. It is not an appointment of a puppet but of a man who possesses a certain authority and who is able to make compromises. On the other hand, one must not have any illusions but wait and see how the regime handles matters.

Essentially, the political process will continue to be marked by large oppositional movements from the working class, from students, parties--the National Party, the Colorado Party, the parties of the Frente Amplio. The focal point is the unity and the joint action of all these forces. Special significance is accorded those who had to operate illegally, particularly our party. How large the opening is, will essentially be determined through measures such as: the release of political prisoners, the repeal of bans on political activities, unimpeded work by political parties, no restrictions on labor unions and people's organizations, the return of Uruguayans living in exile, the restoration of democratic rights and freedoms for all, i.e. the opposite of these things that have been practiced during the last few years by the dictatorship.

[Question] Proposals were announced for the democratization....

R. Arismendi: The measures are limited that have to date been introduced within this framework. To be sure, the political rights of a few persons have been restored, but they were not the most representative persons, the true leaders of the traditional parties. Approximately 8,000 citizens are still without political rights. The process of democratization cannot consist of words or long-term promises. In his speech President Alvarez did indeed express his desire for opening up the political process and for dialog. He advocated the independence of the Justice Department, the right to vote and the recognition of the results of the

plebiscite. When references are made to regulations dealing with the right to strike, one could even interpret this as normal labor union activities; but, naturally, only when this regulation is not used as a means to force the labor union movement into a strait jacket and not without considering the demands of the working people and the OIT (Organizaci6n Internacional del Trabajo--International Labor Organization).

The presidential address also contained a statement emphasizing the necessity of a new constitution. One can understand that the development which failed in November must not be repeated and the fascist institutional regulations must not be maintained either. The way to open up society is to call a truly democratic constitutional convention, but one should not believe as some do that this function could be performed by the insignificant Council of State. It is true, it was expanded by admitting political personalities, but they had not been elected by the parties or the people. But we cannot wait until 1985 to have this done.

[Question] The new president expressed his opposition to Marxism-Leninism and to the work of the Marxists.

R. Arismendi: Of course, he represents the opinion of the circles who occupy important positions. One knows that all democrats, whether they are Marxists or not, are attacked in the name of these interests. If one states, however, that one is speaking in the name of the nation, one cannot simultaneously carry on an ideological crusade against trends which are rooted in the national reality, originate from within the nation and are a component of the democratic tradition. One cannot push aside communists, socialists and others without renouncing simultaneously the proclaimed democratic plans. This was expressed, for instance, by the National Party, by leading personalities of the Colorado Party, like Jorge Batlle, Flores Mora, the leader of the Herrera fraction (of the National Party--HORIZONT), Silveira Zabala, and the weekly newspapers OPINAR and LA DEMOCRACIA as well as many others. To be a Marxist or not is a question of the struggle for ideas, and it cannot be manipulated through decrees or repression. And the ideological struggle is one of the best democratic traditions in Uruguay.

When one looks at all these statements, it becomes apparent that they reflect the realities, the struggle, the abuses, the position of parties, of labor unions and other circles. But they have their limits. Nevertheless, we would like to emphasize that the facts constitute the measure of all things. They will be instrumental as far as providing a real opening or, essentially, maintain present policies, which cover the country with blood and isolate it internationally. There will be no real opening without releasing prisoners, without lifting the bans on political activities, without permitting parties and organizations. All repressive intentions are doomed to failure.

We communists are closely tied to the life in Uruguay and its democratic traditions. Nobody must underestimate the working class and the ideas of the progressive forces. The future depends on the actions of the people, on the unity and agreement as well as international activities of all those who are demanding a real democratization in Uruguay. For the reasons mentioned above it would be wrong to say that everything stays the same. The structure of the dictatorship is developing cracks. The struggle by the people has produced the first results of general significance. The intensification of this struggle, the unity and the agreement of the entire people provide the fundamental guarantees for the restoration of democracy.

BRIEFS

REFUGEES IN BRAZIL--Porto Alegre--Jair Krischke, vice president of the justice and human rights movement in Rio Grande do Sul State, reported yesterday that 160 Uruguayans kidnapped by military and security organizations during the past 25 days are missing from Montevideo. He said that frightened by the sudden hardening of the regime, many Uruguayans "are already beginning to escape to Brazil, entering as tourists, but that they are really trying to run away from repression." He added that 2 weeks ago 45 students from the Montevideo University of Medicine and 37 bank employees were detained and tortured. Of these students, four are still missing. The leader of the Rio Grande do Sul justice movement added: "Not even in the toughest years of repression by the Uruguayan military regime (1973-1974) were there so many missing persons or such intense persecutions." [Text] [PY062019 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 5 Nov 81 p 8]

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